

IN THE CLAIMS

The following listing of the claims is provided in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121.

1. (currently amended) A method of manufacturing an electric motor, comprising:
disposing a stator having a plurality of stator leads into a lead separating assembly, the leads extending beyond the stator from windings installed in stator slots;
gathering the plurality of stator leads together into a bundle; and
driving a lead separator through the stator into engagement with the plurality of stator leads gathered together to separate each of the plurality of stator leads gathered together.
2. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein disposing comprises securing the stator to a pallet adapted to position the stator within a stator lead separating device.
3. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of stator leads extend freely from the stator.
4. (currently amended) The method as recited in claim 3, wherein gathering comprises placing the plurality of stator ~~windings~~ leads extending freely from the stator into a lead collector and rotating the lead collector to wind the stator leads together.
5. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein gathering comprises securing a clamp to the plurality of stator leads gathered together.

6. (original) The method as recited in claim 5, wherein gathering comprises utilizing the clamp to apply tension to the plurality of stator leads gathered together.
7. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein driving comprises utilizing a motorized apparatus to drive the lead separator through the stator.
8. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising providing a lead separator with a plurality of outwardly extending teeth disposed circumferentially around the lead separator, wherein each tooth is adapted to penetrate the plurality of stator leads gathered together and to separate each the plurality of stator leads gathered together.
9. (original) The method as recited in claim 8, wherein providing comprises providing a lead separator adapted to individually restrain each of the plurality of stator leads gathered together.
10. (currently amended) The method as recited in claim 9, wherein the plurality of teeth cooperate to direct each of the plurality of stator leads towards [[the]] flexible material disposed between pairs of teeth.
11. (original) The method as recited in claim 8, wherein providing comprises identifying the number of stator leads in the plurality of stator leads and providing a lead separator with the same number of teeth as the number of stator leads.
12. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising securing the lead separator to a stator clamp secured to the stator to maintain each stator lead separated.

13. (original) The method as recited in claim 12, further comprising removing the stator, stator clamp, and lead separator from the lead separating device for movement to another electric motor manufacturing device.

14.-22. (canceled).

23. (new) A method of manufacturing an electric motor, comprising:
disposing a stator having a plurality of stator leads into a lead separating assembly, the plurality of stator leads extending freely from the stator;
gathering the plurality of stator leads together into a bundle by placing the plurality of stator leads extending freely from the stator into a lead collector and rotating the lead collector to wind the stator leads together; and
driving a lead separator through the stator into engagement with the plurality of stator leads gathered together to separate each of the plurality of stator leads gathered together.

24. (new) The method as recited in claim 23, wherein gathering comprises securing a clamp to the plurality of stator leads gathered together.

25. (new) The method as recited in claim 24, wherein gathering comprises utilizing the clamp to apply tension to the plurality of stator leads gathered together.

26. (new) The method as recited in claim 23, wherein driving comprises utilizing a motorized apparatus to drive the lead separator through the stator.

27. (new) The method as recited in claim 23, further comprising providing a lead separator with a plurality of outwardly extending teeth disposed circumferentially around the lead separator, wherein each tooth is adapted to penetrate the plurality of stator leads gathered together and to separate each the plurality of stator leads gathered together.